

Natural Resource Section Bulletin

August 2011 Edition

How to Deal with Tire Blowouts on the Highway

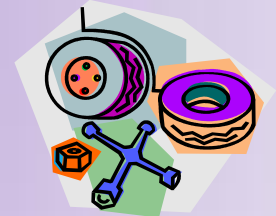
Many parts of a car must be in proper working order to ensure a safe trip to and from work and while you are out in the field, but maybe none more than your tires. Regular inspection and monitoring wear and tear of tires will help prevent a blowout. Any tire with cuts, bubbles on the sidewall, or tread that is worn away should be replaced.

Proper tire inflation is also critical. Most blowouts are caused by under inflated tires that become overheated and explode. Running over a sharp object also can cause blowouts, but proper inflation can prevent this from occurring. In addition, the correct tire inflation will provide better traction and braking, easier steering, and better cornering. Rotating your tires as prescribed by the owner's manual and keeping your wheels properly aligned also will prevent uneven tread wear and tire damage.

Managing a Blowout

Regardless of what you do to prevent them, a blowout can still occur when you're on the road. If it does, take the following steps:

- Don't panic
- Instead of braking, ease off the gas; the rapidly deflating tire will slow down your vehicle
- Hold the wheel firm and try to steer as straight as possible
- Avoid quick maneuvers that can send the vehicle into a rollover
- Coast to a stop, carefully steering to a safe stopping place
- While driving on a flat tire may damage a wheel, this is preferable to full-vehicle or bodily damage
- Turn on the emergency flashers and exit the vehicle cautiously



Once you are in a safe area, use police flares, warning flags, or reflector triangles behind your vehicle to alert other drivers. If you know how to change the tire, and can do so safely, then go ahead. If not, call for help or wait for a police officer or tow-truck operator.

If you're waiting for help, never stand behind or next to the traffic-side of your vehicle. Sometimes the median is the safest place to pull over, thus making the right side of the car the traffic-side exposure.

Following these simple steps can keep you safe if you are ever in a situation with a blown tire.

New Endangered/Threatened Plants listed in Colorado

US Fish and Wildlife has listed three plants – the Pagosa Skyrrocket, the Parachute Beardtongue and the DeBeque Phacelia as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The Skyrrocket (found in Archuleta County) is listed as endangered; the other two (found in Mesa and Garfield counties) are listed as threatened. Critical habitat has also been designated. The description of those locations can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/plants/3ColoradoPlants/index.html>.



Winter Exclusion (WEX) Explanation

Permit #COR-030000 Part I.D.6(a)(3) Winter Conditions Inspections Exclusion – *Inspections are not required at sites where construction activities are temporarily halted, snow cover exists over the entire site for an extended period, and melting conditions posing a risk of surface erosion do not exist.* This exception is applicable only during the period where melting conditions do not exist, and applies to the routine 14-day and monthly inspections, as well as the post-storm event inspections. The following information must be documented in the inspection record for use of this exclusion: dates when snow cover occurred, date when construction activities ceased, and date melting conditions began. Inspections, as described above, are required at all other times.

Therefore criteria for this exemption include: 1) construction activities are temporarily halted, AND 2) snow cover exists over the entire project AND 3) melting conditions posing the risk of surface erosion do not exist. NOTE that the regulation goes on to indicate that “This exception is applicable only during the period where melting conditions do not exist”. The implication for our purposes of when to inspect a project that has been in the exclusion is that once melting conditions exist OR snow cover no longer exists over the entire site OR construction resumes, thus the expectation is that a project must have a monthly inspection as soon as the exclusion criteria are no longer met.

Notice to the Regions

Starting in September, EPB will be asking the regions to review this year in light of the new CDOT Migratory Bird specification. The USFWS will be on hand to answer questions. We are curious about what worked, what didn't, how to improve it, etc. We will be sending out a survey prior to interviewing the regions, so be on the lookout for that.

World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD)

World Water monitoring Day is a global event in mid-September that encourages students everywhere to take and test water samples from their local water supplies. The results are sent to a global database to catalogue the status of the world's streams.

CH2MHill in conjunction with the EPA, CDPHE, and Water for People (WFP) have developed a 3-hour WWMD event at Confluence Park in downtown Denver. This would be a great outreach opportunity for CDOT! If anyone is interested in volunteering or has an idea for a booth activity, please contact Giovanna Toppi.

More information on WWMD will come in the near future.

New Training Available!

What: Environmental Project Management

When: October 4th and 5th

Where: Mt Evans

Sign up through the My Learning Tab in the CDOT Portal

Need Public Speaking Help? Join Toastmasters!

When: Wednesdays

Time: 12:00-12:55 PM

Location: HQ or Region 6

Visit our website for more info at:
<http://roadtosuccess.freetoasthost.info/>

Exciting Field Day for RECAT Inspectors

Amber Law (HQ), Wayne Dunkle (R2) and Mike Banovich (HQ) were en route to the area where the 3 fugitives known as the Daughtery Gang were stopped by Colorado and Federal Law Enforcements on August 10th. They were to conduct a regional environmental inspection on an I-25 bridge/CBC project just north of the conflict. The ECS from Lawrence Construction, CDOT's contractor, engaged one of the fleeing suspects near the construction office and trailer just minutes before Amber, Wayne and Mike arrived to start the meeting. Fortunately, no one was not hurt, as the gang was well known to be armed and dangerous.

A full article about the ordeal can be found at

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/fugitive-siblings-captured-high-speed-chase-fbi/story?id=14270164>. The picture below was taken by Amber of the scene.

Notice the close proximity of the crash to the construction trailer!



New Programmatic Categorical Exclusions Agreement with FHWA

The new agreement has more detailed evaluation criteria and establishes seven new programmatic categorical exclusion categories. The agreement is available on EPB's Intergovernmental Agreements page at

<http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/environmental/resources/agreements>



House Victory for USFWS



The House of Representatives voted to strike language in its Interior Appropriations Bill that would have prohibited the Fish and Wildlife Service from spending any money to list species or designate critical habitat.

Visit <http://www.eswr.com> for more information on the House Spending Bill.

Outfall Mapping Complete

As per CDOT's MS4 Stormwater Permit, the required mapping of outfalls within CDOT's MS4 area have been finished!



Rattlesnake Populations

Rattlesnake populations are high this year, particularly along the Front Range south of Denver.



Just a reminder to wear your snake gators if you are going to be working in dry, warm areas where snakes are more common.